

heart of the South, and were inspected at railway stations as so many wild beasts.

More than once we heard threats of killing and hanging us. Several times I COULD HAVE ESCAPED THE GUARD, but my feet were in too awful a condition to walk. Of course I had no clothing except what was on my back. My overcoat was left behind the day before the battle, and my only bedding was a blanket I pulled off from a dead man on the battlefield after I was captured.

On my way here, in North Carolina, I bought another pair of shoes at Weldon. Cigars were 50 cents apiece at Weldon, and whiskey 25 cents. Am glad I was not. Comfort money was worth \$5 to \$10 for \$1 of Uncle Sam's money.

We passed Petersburg last night, and this morning on the train crossed the James River bridge. Thousands of our poor Northern soldiers freezing and starving on a wet sand-bar down in the river, known as Belle Isle.

All this is to let you know how I happen to be here. I trust you did not see the Philadelphia Press account of the battle, for there I was put down among the list of killed. Libby, had as they say it, is still an improvement on being killed.

A flag-of-truce boat leaves to-day for Fort Monroe, and carries letters North. I may send this so, or I may give it to some official who is to be sent North soon.

I can tell you little yet about Libby, only that it is a great big three-story brick warehouse, owned by Libby & Son; hence the name. They tell me there are 600 Federal officers here now. I will write you many details soon.

LIBBY PRISON, RICHMOND, Dec. 10, '63. DEAR JOHN: I write just a line to tell you to be sure and send me a box with some provisions, such as dried beef, coffee, and butter, and money in the box, for the Yankees go through every package arriving for us and confiscate every dollar found.

Then we were first brought up-stairs into Libby's, a number of about 25 prisoners received us with yells of "Fresh fish! Fresh fish! Who thinks he's got a good thing of it! Fresh fish! Fresh fish! Who thinks a Copperhead! Fresh fish!"

At the same time they were jerked, hauled and buffeted, clear over the heads of the committee to the floor among the other prisoners, mud getting and laughing.

To-day I found out that that ceremony is gone through with on all "fresh fish," or new arrivals.

To-day a newcomer got quite and about it.

LIBBY PRISON, RICHMOND, Dec. 11, '63. DEAR JOHN: To-day I bought one of the guards the enclosed photograph of Libby. Cost 25 cents in Confederate money. The guard took it to the James River with the Kanawha Canal between—the latter close to the prison. The tents you see in the picture are the quarters of the rebel guards.

There is a line of sentinels about the building, who not only have orders to guard us, but to shoot any prisoner showing himself close to the window. A cheerful set of fellows, these sentinels are. I have seen them shoot at an occasional officer who comes to the prison to see the Yankee lions, disapproves the outrageous treatment we are receiving. We have more visitors, too, than you would imagine. Almost daily some kind of a "stand-up," suppose, is escorted through the prison by Maj. Turner, the commander.

They rarely speak to us, but their eyes tell what they think of us. The very prominent men among the prisoners are pointed out to the visitors.

ONE OF THE BIG WIGS here among us is Gen. Neal Dow, the famous Temperance leader. He has a little bit of a gray old fellow, with twinkling blue eyes and a pleasant voice. He is treated just like the rest of us. The board where he sleeps on the floor is close to the board where I sleep; for you must know that every fellow has his own board, where he sleeps at night and where his things are piled up during the day. Many of us have cut barrels in two pieces and made comfortable chairs of them.

At night we pile our chairs up on a rude table made of boxes, provided we have one, roll ourselves up in our single blanket, except when we sleep together and double blankets, and when there is a "stand-up" is heard around to sleep the best we can.

When morning comes we take our portion of cornbread (not ground with the grain) down stairs to where the cook stove is, where the light is not bad, and then make a kind of porridge or mush out of the unsavory mess.

A few boxes of provisions sent the prisoners from friends in the North have brought into the prison. The lucky recipients have divided generously with those of us who have received nothing. So we have some meat and coffee and occasionally meat.

The ration, at least as you may know, is mighty poor, and not half equal to the shortest army ration even sent in the North.

I want you to send me, per express, via Washington and flag of truce, a box containing some good coffee, dried beef, a couple of flour shirts, and a blanket. I have no overcoat, and the wind comes in through these open windows.

It is cold as GREENLAND. My boots happen to be good, but I remain in doors here, I don't touch cold. My coat and pants are strong and good for six months, by which time I hope to be out of here and back in the war.

I am beginning to make acquaintances here, and find many interesting men in Libby. We dare write nothing of the war, so on that subject expect nothing.

They say all letters sent from or to the prison are inspected, but I don't much doubt it—there are too many of them; besides, I have seen some queer queries that I know were allowed to pass, or else were not inspected. The fact of the matter is, we prisoners know nothing of what is going on, but we see the Richmond Examiner often, but the censorship is as strong on them as it is on us, and nobody of sense would believe what he reads in a newspaper anyway.

I will tell you one thing the Richmond Examiner does say, though, that is probably true. "The Yankee prisoners in Libby," remarks this best of an editor, Mr. Daniels, "are likely to kill your dogs and use them for rations if you go too close to the line where they are confined. Let it be so; it is right; it is dog eat dog."

Jefferson Davis reads the exposures of this miserable every morning at the breakfast-table, and then gets up and puts his name to an official message, in which he says that "regarding our humane treatment, the prisoners are dying of a shocking rate."

And anybody in the wide world ever read such heartless and outrageous insinuations of us, more than any other man, is guilty for what he is going on in the South to-day. Some day he will have a reckoning.

Don't forget what I said about getting money in boxes. I wrote you a long letter Sunday. Hope you got it. Some home papers wouldn't be so strict in that box.

LIBBY PRISON, RICHMOND, Dec. 14, '63. DEAR JOHN: I expect you would like to know how we spend our time here. Well, many play cards constantly, and many play dice. That is an old-fashioned game, and it is not much to be said for it. There are very many fine players in the prison—one man who has never lost a game, and he has been here in Libby since the first day of the war.

Some kind of a game, such as the play of a little battle. Such a game has been going on for two days.

Many good books and old magazines constantly just as they can pick up, or as those who have a little money can buy by sending outside. There is no choice, of course, and worthless novels are read as much as anything.

Some, a few only, are studying text-books and reciting to the better educated. One man has an old law book, and is consulting it to memory. Two or three are writing histories and experiences of Libby Prison.

Some kind of a game, such as the play of a little battle. Such a game has been going on for two days.

Libby Prisoner, having that I will keep all my life.

There are one or two men here who sleep nearly all the time. I think they are glad to be in prison; it rests them. There are also half a dozen Copperheads here, who with their Southern friends, they are pretty generally despised. Think of a man with Union shoulder-straps being a Copperhead!

More anon, MARSH.

LIBBY PRISON, RICHMOND, Dec. 16, '63. DEAR JOHN: If you count the windows in the picture I sent you you can tell just about where I am located in Libby. The board of the floor that I sleep on is near the first window, north end of upper east room. I and my messmates have a table made of a pine box. This box serves for table, wardrobe, kitchen, and general storage.

At night we pile our chairs, made of barrels, on top of it, and so have room to lie down on the floor. Our boots serve us for pillows. Strange enough, I sleep well on that cold floor, except the nights that are very cold, and then it is awful to lie there.

It is now, awake, chilling, and wishing for daylight to come, that I may get up and walk about. Of course all the prisoners must go to bed and get up together, as the floor is completely covered when all are lying down.

The first thing we hear every morning, from day-dawn, is the loud voice of an old darky, Ben, who peddles the city papers, crying out, "Here's your Dispatch," "here's your Examiner and Flag," and "Great News from Lee's Army," "Great News from the North," "Great News from Georgia!"

That darky's voice is our reveille, and it is a welcome sound. Sometimes he cries out, "News of Exchange Prisoners," and we all know that he is telling us that some of our boys are coming home.

We have almost given up hopes of exchange. We have been deceived so often, so often. Thank you for the box and the "goodies." Our mess lives some better now. I am studying the Latin grammar you put in the box, and recite to Maj. Marshall every day at 2.

LIBBY PRISON, RICHMOND, Dec. 19, 1863. DEAR JOHN: My dinner to-day was a little better than yesterday. It was a little better than yesterday. It was a little better than yesterday.

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Belle Isle a number of the Union prisoners were to death. It is a wonder they don't all die.

The papers say that hundreds and almost thousands of the poor of Richmond are at the point of freezing and starving, but the rebellion goes on.

LIBBY PRISON, RICHMOND, Feb. 2, 1864. DEAR JOHN: The prison is cold, dark, and gloomy nowadays. We can hardly see to read in cloudy weather. The Yankees have put iron bars over the windows to prevent our escaping, and yet a man gets away occasionally. We don't know what becomes of him, whether he reaches the North or is killed, or, still worse, tied up and starved in some prison-hole in the South.

Our dinner to-day consisted of a big chunk of cold, half-baked corn bread, nothing more. What do you think of it for cold-weather diet? A great lot of boxes that came from the North got as far as the prison door, and then were all confiscated by the rebels.

Was very sick to-day; fell over in a swoon. Bad diet and cold will get kill half of the prisoners here.

Yesterday three prisoners were shot—one of them seven times—in trying to escape from the island. Killing prisoners has become a common thing at the island and down at Andersonville, according to accounts in the rebel papers.

I send this by Col. Powell, who is exchanged. There are 900 prisoners here sick in hospital. Things are getting worse daily. The rations are fit for dogs, and, besides, we have no constant danger of some fool home-guard firing at the widows and killing us.

SUNDAY, Feb. 7. Five of our comrades died a day or so ago in the prison. So they are going. Two nights ago a tunnel was completed, and 100 prisoners escaped. A number have been caught and brought back. Two are reported killed. I will write all about this escape in another letter.

LIBBY PRISON, RICHMOND, March 3. DEAR JOHN: Still no exchange, and we are tired to death waiting. I got a box yesterday, which makes me feel a little better. The ration now is a bit of corn bread, two spoonfuls of rice, and occasionally a bit of meat.

This order was nailed up in the prison on the 10th.

Officers standing near the windows will be liable to be shot. What do you think of that? I am glad to say the first man killed as result of this inhuman order was a rebel officer of the prison. His name was John Smith.

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ARMY ANECDOTES.

(Continued from first page.)

that they would on their return to the United States disseminate very favorable reports in relation to the part he had taken in the war. Unfortunately they had formed an adverse opinion in reference to his share in the action of Buena Vista, blaming severely for losing two-thirds of his guns on that occasion. They gave us no credit for having whipped the best-appointed army in Mexico, 23,000 strong, with our 5,500 men. Most of the party refused to respond to the General's invitation to call at his headquarters, but finally two, more curious than the rest, thought they would go and see.

"WHAT THE OLD FELLOW WANTED." The General received them in some state, surrounded by his staff, and complimented them on their achievements at Sacramento. Their manner, however, was anything but cordial, and they answered in a contemptuous way, "Yes, we didn't lose none of our guns."

This was rather a stunner for the General, but he rallied and said: "That's right, men; stand up for your own victory."

To this they replied, to the great amusement of the spectators: "When you don't know nothing about fighting Mexicans, you must crowd 'em, General! Crowd 'em! That's the way." They then walked out of the tent.

I was not present myself, but this was the scene as it was described to me at the time it occurred.

The negro is not usually credited with wit, although he, too, frequently amuses others by his misconceptions and want of general knowledge. In my experience I can recall two instances of attempts at humor on the part of our colored brethren.

In the advance against Monterey, Feb. 19, 1862, the negro troops had to report to the city, while our Engineer officers, supported by the cavalry, went out on a reconnaissance. When the fighting commenced one of the negro servants left camp and went as far to the front as he dared, to see what was going on. On his way back he met several of his fellow companions, who were also going to the front.

GRATIFY THEIR CURIOSITY. He said to them: "Go right ahead, and down darat de turn de road you will find six colored gentlemen waiting for you."

"What do you mean, neggar?" was the reply. "Never mind, I'll show you. You go right ahead. They waiting for you."

So they kept on until they came upon six turkey-buzzards sitting on a fence.

At a 4th of July celebration at Fort McKovett, Tex., the negro troops had to report to the occasion. One passage in his speech excited great hilarity. He said: "When I was a boy, I was once taken to strike for freedom and de Constitution, what did I do? I struck for home."

A negro came into camp during the latter part of the war to apply for rations for his wife and child. He was told that he could have them, provided he took the oath of allegiance.

"What an oath of allegiance?" he inquired. "You have to swear to support the Constitution of the United States."

"Lord bless you, Massa!" he replied, "it is more than I can do to support the old woman and the children."

Another negro complained to an officer that he had been told that "de war was provisions in de Constitution for de colored people, and he had not had the first mouthful."

I never heard of any attempt at humor on the part of an INDIAN. Their idea of humor is a more hideous device to torture their enemies; like burying a man alive up to his neck and leaving him to die a slow death. Like the negroes, however, they sometimes make peculiar speeches.

An Indian in Arizona whose field of corn had been destroyed by the troops, said to Gen. Crook: "Planting no seed! Plant corn, soldier man come along with horse and cat 'em up! Plant corn again, and—least cat 'em up."

The officers present laughed heartily, but the Indian preserved an impressive countenance, and was evidently surprised at the merriment he excited.

There was an outbreak of the Seminoles just before our civil war began. I was in command of a post at Fort Capron, and several companies of the 1st Florida Cavalry were sent to me, with a view to force the hostile tribe to go on a reservation in Arkansas. One of the Captains of the State troops sent out by me came upon an Indian trail, which led into the Everglades, and he followed it for several days.

He tracked them to an island, and came upon them at break of day. The Indian said that it was useless to resist, so he held up his hands, and the little children did the same. As the officer approached the Indian said: "How you do?"

"Thank you," was the reply, "my health is pretty good at present. I hope you and your family are well. How would you like to go to Arkansas?"

"Arkansas cold too much!" was the poor Indian's protest.

Another Indian incident has a touch of humor in it, and seems to be worth recording: ABOUT 1854 AN UPRISING OF THE SIOUX was threatened in Dakota, and a battalion of the 1st Light Infantry was sent to the point where the savages were concentrating. The infantry officer ranked the commander of the battery by brevet and was entitled to a light battery; but on their way to the point where the savages were concentrating, he was killed by the savages.

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wits and humorists in the Army, some of whom gained considerable celebrity. I remember one of these, named Forbes Brittan, whose sayings and doings were a good deal quoted. He enhanced his jokes exceedingly by his perfect command of confidence, and by the gravity of his demeanor. In the beginning of hostilities against the Seminoles in Florida a large force was assembled at Fort Jupiter, on the eastern coast, and Brittan reported for duty there. Soon after the Chief Quartermaster, Capt. Dusenberry, sent him and told him that he knew he had had

VERY LITTLE EXPERIENCE, but that, as so many officers were ignorant or on other duty, he was to have him assigned as Post Quartermaster, which would throw upon him the responsibility of several hundred animals, ammunitions, and wagons. Brittan placed the matter in the hands of his officer to perfection. He listened, with his head down and arms hanging by his side, to a long lecture upon the importance of the duties that had been thrust upon him, and the necessity of devoting himself heart and hand to the work. At last there was a pause. Brittan raised his head and said:

"Capt. Dusenberry, are you entirely through?"

"I believe that is all I have to say at present."

"If you are entirely through, won't you have the kindness of moving out of my stanzas from the 'Star Spangled Banner'?"

The Captain was very wroth, and said afterward that he would have arrested him and had him court-martialed for disrespect, but the charges would have created too much merriment in the Army, so he refrained.

Brittan at times was humorous in action as well as in words. When Gen. Wool was in command of the 6th of the Atlantic he went down to Key West to make an inspection of the post. After the military ceremonies were over, Brittan accompanied the General on his way to the wharf when he was about leaving. He was moving.

RESPECTFUL AND DIFFIDENTIAL in his deportment, but the General noticed that whenever they passed a group of soldiers' rank of laughter were heard. He inquired of Brittan the meaning of this ill-timed mirth. Brittan answered that it was merely some nonsense of their own, and turned to them and made a gesture of reproach, which added immensely to their hilarity. The fact was that the time he was waiting to see the General he was simulating a hitch in his gait which was irresistibly ludicrous.

His friend, an Engineer Corps man, was, by far, the most celebrated wit we ever had in the Army. He wrote a book of jokes under the pseudonym of "John Phoenix," which was published a long time ago. It had an extensive circulation, but it was not very effective in manner. While he was in California in the effect of the gold excitement rendered an officer's salary wholly inadequate for his support. At last Congress passed a law to remedy the deficiency by increasing the pay of officers to \$10,000 a year. The law was not in force at the time when the bill was passed, and the officers were not paid for some time. The bill was passed, and the officers were not paid for some time. The bill was passed, and the officers were not paid for some time.

DEAR CHARLES: I have received your modest request asking for five per cent. on the first month's pay, which I have been kind enough to grant you, and after deliberating on the matter for five seconds I have come to the conclusion that I will not do so.

Another case of a soldier who was a humorist. He was a private in the 1st Cavalry, and he was a humorist. He was a private in the 1st Cavalry, and he was a humorist. He was a private in the 1st Cavalry, and he was a humorist.

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